

MOTHS WHICH HAVE COLONIZED THE ISLE OF WIGHT IN RECENT YEARS (PART 2)

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INTRODUCTION

Since the previous paper (Knill-Jones, 1998) a further seventeen species of moths (twelve micros and five macros) have colonized the Isle of Wight bringing the total number of Lepidoptera recorded from the Island to more than 500. Details of their establishment, dates, localities and abundance are given here. Records for the Microlepidoptera have been extracted from Langmaid & Young (1998–2006). During the last ten years the Island has experienced milder winters and warmer summers as has been the trend in the previous two decades giving further evidence for global warming.

These conditions have been conducive to the spread of rapidly colonising species. However, it is probable that more species with localised distribution have disappeared due to habitat changes and that the total number present on the Island may have declined.

ECTOEDEMA HERINGELLA MARIANI (NEPTICULIDAE)

On 3.ii.07 D.T.B. examined a previously uninspected plantation of holm oak, *Quercus ilex* on the Osborne House estate on the Island and was surprised to find that every leaf of every tree was affected by the upper surface corridor mines of this moth. The identity of the causer was confirmed by Dr J.R. Langmaid. Later that month it was clear that the rest of the Osborne estate holm oak population was affected and it was known that these trees had not been affected the previous year. During the spring of 2007 mined leaves caused by this species were found in six of the Island's ten-kilometre squares. Until 2001 this moth was only known from the Mediterranean islands, Corsica, Sicily and Cyprus, and from Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece. An imago had been taken in South Kensington in 1996 but was not positively identified until 2001 (Honey, 2002). By 2005 it was only known from Greater London but by mid-2007 it had been recorded from all along the south coast from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to Suffolk and from the inland counties of Middlesex, Surrey, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire (*pers. comm.* J.R.L.).

PHYLLONORYCTER PLATANI STAUDINGER (GRACILLARIIDAE)

This species was discovered new to Britain in October 1990 by A.M. Emmet in the grounds of Imperial College, South Kensington, mining the leaves of London plane, *Platanus × hispanica* (Emmet, 1991). By 1998 it had spread across London to southeast England and north to the midlands. It appeared in Hampshire in 1998 and was first found on the Island 27.ix.04 at Fairlee, near Newport, on a tree which had been inspected the previous year and which was then unaffected. The find by D.T.B. was confirmed by J.R.L. The mine starts as an inconspicuous corridor alongside the main vein and later develops into an inflated tentiform blotch which deforms the leaf.

The moth is spreading slowly across the Island with trees now in three ten-kilometre squares affected. Originally the moth was native to south-eastern Europe where its host is Oriental plane, *Platanus orientalis*, which is found eastwards to India. The moth has spread throughout Europe in recent years, reaching the Netherlands in 1965, Denmark 1978 and Sweden 1991. By 2007 it has been found in southern England, East Anglia, the midlands and north to Lincolnshire and Lancashire (*pers. comm.* J.R.L.).

PHYLLONORYCTER LEUCOGRAPHELLA ZELLER (GRACILLARIIDAE)

First recorded for Britain in February 1989 from Wickford in Essex by A.M. Emmet, it was soon found to exist throughout south and east Essex (Emmet, 1989). The larva causes a conspicuous silvery tentiform blotch on the upper surface of the leaf of firethorn, *Pyracantha coccinea*, centred over the midrib and flecked with small rusty red spots. By 1998 it was known from across southern England and across the Midlands to N.E. Yorkshire. It was first recorded from Hampshire in 1998 and from the Island 31.iii.01 when 146 mines were counted, some tenanted, some vacated, from one yellow-berried *Pyracantha* bush in Gurnard (D.T.B., confirmed by J.R.L.). It has now been found in eight of our ten ten-kilometre squares, on hawthorn, *Cotoneaster* and apple as well as *Pyracantha*. Originally native to Europe south of the Alps the moth has spread through northwest Europe during the last 40 years as planting of *Pyracantha* has increased, particularly on new housing developments. So far as the U.K. is concerned it is now found right up to southern Scotland (J.R.L.).

CAMERARIA OHRIDELLA DESCHKA & DIMIC (GRACILLARIIDAE)

This now notorious invader was first found on the Island as tenanted mines on horse chestnut, *Aesculus hippocastanum* at Pelham woods, Ventnor, 15.ix.04 (D.T.B.). The first British record had been from Wimbledon, south London in July 2002. It was found in Oxford in 2003 and in Hampshire in 2004. It is now found right across the Isle of Wight. Deschka and Dimic described it as a new species in 1986, it having been found in Macedonia for the first time in 1985 (Deschka & Dimic, 1986). Since then it has spread rapidly northwestwards across Europe, reaching Austria in 1989, Germany 1992 and the Netherlands by 1999. The larvae produce multiple elongated pale brown blotch mines on the upper surface of the leaves of *A. hippocastanum* but so far on the Island not on red chestnut, *A. × carnea*. By mid-2007 the moth had been reported from the whole of southern England, East Anglia and the Midlands north to Cheshire (J.R.L.).

PHYLLOCNISTIS XENIA HERING (GRACILLARIIDAE)

This species was first recorded in Britain on 9.ix.74 by E.C. Pelham-Clinton from near Dover, Kent (Pelham-Clinton, 1976). He had found some superficial upper-surface leaf-mines on grey poplar, *Populus × canescens*. The mines were characterised by a thick central track of frass and the long sinuous silvery mines ended at the leaf margin where pupation occurred in a small leaf fold. It was found near Canterbury in 1982 and in Devon 1992. The first Island record was of mines on white poplar, *P. alba* on St Helen's Duver 17.viii.02 (Sue Blackwell and Bill Shepard, identified by D.T.B. and confirmed by J.R.L.). The only other Island site so far recorded is Osborne where tenanted mines were found 15.vi.07 by D.T.B. on *P. alba*. The moth

is found in Europe from Poland to Spain but is reported to be local and uncommon. By mid-2007 it was known from coastal counties from Dorset to Norfolk (J.R.L.).

TACHYSTOLA ACROXANTHA MEYRICK (OECOPHORIDAE)

This adventive colonist was first recorded on the Island from Gurnard 11.viii.02 (D.T.B., identified by J.M. Cheverton, confirmed by J.R.L.). Its first appearance in England had been in South Devon in 1908. It is a native of S.E. Australia. After the initial record in 1908 only three more specimens were found until 1970. Since then it has spread, reaching Somerset in 1981, Cornwall 1985, Hampshire 1994, London 1996 and Kent 1999. By mid-2007 records had been received from coastal counties from Cornwall to Suffolk and from the West Midlands north to Lancashire. The larva lives in leaf litter and the adult moth can be found from April to November.

BLASTOBASIS LACTICOLELLA REBEL (BLASTOBASIDAE)

This moth is a native of Madeira but it appeared in London in 1946 and has spread from there, initially slowly into the southeast of England. Since about 2000 it has spread much more rapidly and much further afield, now (2007) being found from the south coast of England to the north of Scotland (J.R.L.). It first appeared in Hampshire in 1993 and on the Isle of Wight 14.vi.1999 at Freshwater (S.K.-J.). The larva feeds on fresh and dead plant material, dead insect material and bird droppings.

MOMPHA STURNIPENNELLA TREITSCHKE (MOMPHIDAE)

A deformed seed-pod of rosebay willowherb, *Chamerion angustifolium* was found in Bouldnor Forest 26.viii.1998 (D.T.B.). It was taken home and from it hatched 11.ix.1998 a *Mompha* sp. which was identified as this species by J.R.L. The first confirmed English record was of an adult hatched from galls found at Oxshott, Surrey in 1950. Since then it has spread slowly and it is now found (2007) from Dorset to Norfolk, in the Welsh Marches and Midlands, north to Lancashire and Yorkshire. It first appeared in Hampshire in 1995. Its native range is from central and northern Europe across to Central Asia and the Russian Far East.

COSMOPTERIX PULCHRIMELLA CHAMBERS (COSMOPTERIGIDAE)

Just before Christmas, 22.xii.2006, mines of this new Island moth were found at Shanklin on pellitory-of-the-wall, *Parietaria judaica* (D.T.B., confirmed by J.R.L.). One contained a larva. Since then heavy infestations of the moth have been found at two other sites in the southeast of the Island. The moth first appeared in England in Dorset (2001) and Cornwall (2004) (Sterling, 2004). Its original range was from France and Switzerland through southern Europe to Greece and former Yugoslavia. The larva forms a conspicuous white blotch on the upperside of the leaves. Plants growing in shaded situations seem to be preferentially mined. By mid-2007 the moth had been recorded from Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire, Sussex and Berkshire (J.R.L.).

COCHYLIS MOLLICULANA ZELLER (TORTRICIDAE)

The occurrence of the above species in Britain is documented by John Langmaid (Langmaid, 1994), following his discovery and dissection of a specimen taken in his light trap at Southsea on 21.viii.1993. It was later found that two earlier specimens had been taken at Portland, Dorset, in late June 1991 and at Lyme Regis, Dorset, in early July 1993. In 1994, larvae were found in great abundance in heads of bristly ox-tongue *Picris echioides*, on waste ground at Southsea, Portsmouth. Since then it has colonised the south coast of England. On 5.viii.2006 lights were set up in Parkhurst Forest and Tim Norris later identified one of the tortrices as this species which was new to the Isle of Wight. This species is probably widespread in the Mediterranean region.

CROCIDOSEMA PLEBEJANA ZELLER (TORTRICIDAE)

The earliest record of this species appears to be that of a specimen taken by E.R. Banks on 10.x.1900 at Street, South Devon and the next specimen was taken at light on 13.viii.1922 in North Devon. In September, 1957 H.C. Huggins and R.M. Mere confirmed that this species was breeding on Tresco, Isles of Scilly, by obtaining larvae in the leaf axils and ripening fruits of tree-mallow *Lavatera arborea*. It was first found in Hampshire at Martyr Worthy in 1961 (Goater, 1974) and now appears to have become established at low density along the coast of South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. On the Isle of Wight it was first taken at Freshwater on 27.ix.1983 and again on 18.xi.1990 and 1.xii.1991. It was recorded inland at Binstead on 1.xi.1999. It is now regularly taken at Totland in the late autumn.

EVERGESTIS LIMBATA L. (PYRALIDAE)

Simon Colenutt was the first person to record this species in this country when he took two examples on 23.vii and 30.vii.1994 in his light trap at Chale Green on the Isle of Wight (Colenutt, 1995). He recorded two further examples on 14.vii. and 21.vii.1995 and S.K.-J. took it for the first time at Freshwater on 3.vii and 10.vii.1999. Since then it has been regularly recorded along the south coast of the Island and there is also evidence of a second brood as it has been taken in September. It has also been discovered in Sussex. It is easy to rear on its foodplant garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata* and the larva has been found with success in the wild. It is to be found also at a low density in Hampshire.

NOCTUA JANTHINA BORKH. (NOCTUIDAE)

On 9.vii.2001 John Langmaid found a specimen of the above species in his garden moth trap in Southsea, Hampshire (Langmaid, 2002), which was the first time that it had been taken in Britain. This moth was recorded in small numbers in Kent and Sussex in 2003 and has since been extending its range along the south coast of England (Clancy, 2002). On 26.vii.2006 it was taken at Bonchurch on the Isle of Wight by James Halsey and will most likely become established on the Island in future years.

DRYOBOTA LABECULA ESPER (NOCTUIDAE)

This south European species was first noted on Jersey, Channel Island in 1991 and specimens were reported from Guernsey in 1995 and several more the following year

suggesting residency. Terry Rogers took the first example for mainland Britain at Freshwater on 15.x.1999 (Rogers, 2000) and S.K.-J. captured one at light at Freshwater on 22.xi.1999. It was recorded again at Freshwater in 2000 and 2001 whence it was unrecorded until 2004 when several more were taken at Freshwater. It was taken for the first time at Luccombe on 21.x.2004 and at Bonchurch where six were recorded at the end of October. This species is now well established on the south coast of the Isle of Wight and over sixty examples were recorded in 2006. It now is established on the mainland at Dorset and Hampshire.

CRYPHIA ALGAE FABR. (NOCTUIDAE)

In July 1859 two specimens were said to have been taken at Disley, Cheshire and in 1873 another was reported from Hastings, East Sussex (Waring & Townsend, 2003). Over one hundred years passed before the species reappeared in England with a capture at Southsea, Hampshire, on 21.viii.1991. From that date it has occurred in small numbers mostly in the south of England between mid-July and early September and in recent years has become established in several localities. It was first recorded on the Isle of Wight on 27.viii.1992 at Freshwater; at Ninham on 23.viii.1996 at at Brading Marsh on 29.vii.2001. Since that date several have been recorded every year at Bonchurch and in 2006 eight examples were taken at Bonchurch and one at Totland which is evidence that it is now established in the south of the Island.

PLATYPERIGEIA KADENII FREYER (NOCTUIDAE)

This south-eastern European species were recorded for the first time in Britain on 3.x.2002 at New Romney, Kent (Clancy & Honey, 2003). Four more were taken in the Dungeness area the following year and since then it has rapidly extended its range along the south coast of England. It was first recorded on the Island at Bonchurch on 26.ix.2005. Further records followed from Bonchurch with singles on 26 & 28.xi with two more each on 23 & 26.x; one was taken at Totland on 16.x. In 2006 48 examples were reported from Bonchurch, Shanklin & Totland which is evidence that this species is now firmly established on the Island.

HYPENA OBSITALIS HÜBN. (NOCTUIDAE)

This species was first recorded in Britain at Bloxworth, Dorset on 21.ix.1884. Since then it has been recorded six times before the first was noted on the Isle of Wight at Shanklin on 27.i.1968. One was caught by Peter Cramp in his porch at Ventnor on 5.xii.2004 and another was found hibernating in a cave at St. Lawrence on 19.i.2005. This species has been recorded from St. Lawrence, Ventnor, Bonchurch and Totland and there were five records in 2006 which suggest that it may be established at these localities where the larvae feed on pellitory (*Parietaria*) and possibly nettle. It overwinters as an adult. It has been considered to be resident in the Channel Islands since the early 1960s, and on mainland Britain from 1990 following its discovery near Torquay, South Devon. Larvae have been found on numerous occasions and the species is now known to be well established in the Torbay district of Devon.

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Ant Hills in Acid Grassland by Nigel Reeve (2006). The Royal Parks, Richmond.

This new colour leaflet published by The Royal Parks will be of interest to everyone working in nature conservation as it provides a simple and straightforward explanation of the lives of yellow meadow ants *Lasius flavus* and why they build such prominent nest mounds in old pastures. The ecological value and nature conservation management aspects are also discussed. The leaflets are available free from Nigel Reeve at The Royal Parks, Holly Lodge, Richmond Park, London TW10 5HS.

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